



State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

Michael O. Leavitt
Governor

Robert L. Morgan
Executive Director

Lowell P. Braxton
Division Director

1594 West North Temple, Suite 1210

PO Box 145801

Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-5801

(801) 538-5340 telephone

(801) 359-3940 fax

(801) 538-7223 TTY

www.nr.utah.gov

October 28, 2002

TO: Internal File

THRU: Pamela Grubaugh-Littig, Permit Supervisor *pgl*

FROM: Wayne H. Western, Sr. Reclamation Specialist/Engineering *WHW*

RE: Technical Field Visit To Corner Canyon and Mud Water Canyon to follow up on Backfilling and Grading and Vegetation Done in 2000, Plateau Mining Corporation, Star Point Mine, C/007/006

Other Attendees:

Johnny Pappas, Plateau Mining Corporation, visited Corner and Mud Water Canyon
Brain McClelland, USFS, visited Corner Canyon
Katherine Woodfield, USFS, visited Corner Canyon
Stephanie Cartwright, DOGM Board Member, visited Corner and Mud Water Canyon
Wayne Western, DOGM, visited Corner and Mud Water Canyon

Date & Time:

Arrived on site at 9:00 AM, October 10, 2002
Review of Lion's Deck Reclamation 9:00 to 10:00 AM
Visit to Corner Canyon at 11:00-11:45 AM (excludes hiking time)
Visit to Mud Water Canyon 2:00 to 3:00 PM (excludes hiking time)

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the field inspection was to inspect the reclamation work that was done at Corner and Mud Water Canyon in 2000. In addition to inspecting Corner and Mud Water Canyons, the team also reviewed the reclamation work that was done in 2002 at the Lion's Deck area.

TECHNICAL FIELD VISIT

OBSERVATIONS:

The purpose of the meeting was to inspect Corner Canyon and Mud Water Canyon. However, because the Lion's Deck area was en route and contained some Forest Service lands, the inspection team visited the site. During the Lion's Deck stop, the team observed that the backfilling and grading at the Lion's Deck area had been completed along with the seeding. The area had been pocked in order to control erosion and to create microhabitats. The Lion's Deck area was compared to the reclamation work that was done in 2001. Due to time limitations, a complete inspection of the Lion's Deck area was not possible. However, no problems were observed at the site. See pictures in the images file for more details.

The inspection team arrived at the turn out for the Corner Canyon trail at 10:00 AM. The temperature was in the mid-50s and the sky was partly cloudy. The hike involved a 1,100-foot descent over a ½ mile trail. The team arrived at 11:00 AM and departed at 11:45 AM.

The site contains three portal entrances. The portal entrance further down canyon involved the most disturbed area. The reclaimed site appeared to be stable because no major earth movement had occurred. In addition, there were no tension cracks or other signs of instability. At the two upper portal areas, some settling had occurred along the boundary between the reclaimed and native slopes. Johnny Pappas stated that he will have a crew come into the area to do some handwork to feather the disturbed/undisturbed boundary and to take care of any settling cracks.

At the site, the team noticed that some litter had been left on site. The litter consisted of twine, plastic root containers, cable, and roof bolts. The team agreed that the litter should be cleaned up. Katherine Woodfield requested that all non-native material be removed from the Forest Service land. Johnny Pappas agreed to have a team come in with mules to remove all litter.

Because the site was remote, the Permittee used innovative methods to reclaim the site. One method was to construct a log fence above the portal. The fence was held in place by cables. Fill material was placed behind the fence. Once the fill was in place the cables were cut and the fence collapsed. The fill material covered the portal opening. Some of the fence logs stuck up above the ground. Katherine Woodfield requested that the logs be cut because they posed a potential hazard. Johnny Pappas agreed to have the logs cut.

Most of the seedlings planted in 2000 did not survive. The grasses had been established at the site. See photos in the image file for more details. No one on the inspection team was a biologist; therefore, a determination of vegetation adequacy was not made.

No major problems with erosion were noticed. The Division saw no major rills or other erosion features.

TECHNICAL FIELD VISIT

The Forest Service members were unable to attend the Mud Water field trip. The team arrived at the trailhead to Mud Water Canyon at 1:00 PM and returned at 4:15 PM. The temperature was in the upper 50s and the sky was cloudy. The hike again involved a 1,100-foot descent over a ½ mile trail.

The first site that the Division saw was a pre-law portal that the Permittee had backfilled as part of a gratuitous reclamation project. Due to safety constraints, the Permittee was unable to completely backfill the portal. There was a 10-inch gap between the roof and the fill. The fill was approximately 20-feet thick. The fill is a deterrent to those wanting to trespass into the abandoned mine.

The SMCRA side of the site had been backfilled and graded and seeded in 2000. The surface at the site appeared stable; no signs of slumps or slide, or tension cracks. The soil had settled along the backfill and cut slope surface interface.

No erosion problems were noted at the site.

More seedlings survived at Mud Water Canyon than at Corner Canyon. The surface had grasses. Since a biologist was not present, the Division was unable to make a finding about cover adequacy.

The power lines into the site had been removed that summer. The team found a come-along that the contractor had used but mislaid. The item was later returned to the contractor.

RECOMMENDATIONS/CONCLUSIONS:

The Permittee needs to remove all non-native materials from the sites. The Permittee agreed to have a crew with mules go into the site to pack out all non-native materials.

Some minor earthwork needs to be done to fill in minor cracks at soil settling along the reclaimed and native surface interfaces. The Permittee agreed to have that work done.

The Division should continue to evaluate the site on an annual basis.

Once the non-native materials have been removed and the earthwork completed, the sites could be eligible for Phase I bond release. The Permittee wants to apply for Phase I bond release in conjunction with the entire Star Point site.